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SOVIET ARMY'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NORTH KOREA

The technical assistance rendered by the Soviet Army to the North Korean industrial, transportation, and communication systems during its occupation included teaching industrial skills to native technicians. Now, in 1948, the North Koreans can manage modern machines with skill and are able to produce independently more than 100 new products. Numerous power stations, mines, and plants, which were destroyed by the Japanese, have been restored.

Soviet Army engineers helped to rebuild the Hwanghae Ironworks, Hungnam People's Chemical Factory, Kangson Steel Plant, Ch'ongjin Ironworks, Choson Kuksan Sugar Factory, Namp'o Iron Refinery, and many others. The Soviet Army also helped to restore the railroad system of North Korea. Soviet engineers introduced new methods of making coke by substituting Sakhalin and native coal for the Manchurian coal which the Japanese had used. The Soviet Army taught the Koreans new methods of operation and management of industry, including the "independent accounting system" which the Koreans had not heard of before.

North Korean technicians and specialists realize better than anyone else how much of their success they owe to assistance in advanced technology rendered by the Soviet Army. Actually, if the Soviet Union had not given us technical assistance, we could not in so short a time have reconstructed and built up our industrial transportation, and communication systems which were destroyed by the Japanese.

The Japanese imperialists not only did not teach Korean workers technical skills, they even forbade them to enter or work close to certain important areas. Consequently, among the Korean population, to which the North Korean industrial, transportation, and communication systems were returned by the kindness of the Soviet Army, there could be found only 19 percent of the industrial technicians needed, 38 percent of the mining specialists, and 3 percent of the transport specialists. Even these people were less skilled than is ordinarily required.

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The Soviet Army not only liberated us and returned to us all our industrial, transportation, and communication systems, but they also gave tremendous assistance in the restoration and operation of damaged machines. They sent us technicians and specialists who gained experience in restoring and building the people's economy in their own land after the war. They also taught progressive production methods to our workers. As a result, our technicians and workers today are able to manage the gigantic modern machines with skill and are able to produce for themselves more than 100 new industrial products, which even the Japanese were not able to produce during their occupation.

Restoration of Damaged Industrial Installations

Malicious Japanese imperialist bandits damaged all the industrial installations in Korea. Within North Korea alone, they damaged 19 hydroelectric power stations, flooded 64 mines, damaged or partially flooded 178 mines, completely wrecked 47 industrial plants and a number of large factories, and wrecked the transportation and communication systems. The following are a few examples of the assistance of the Soviet Army in rehabilitating the industries of Korea.

In January 1946, the Bureau of Industry of the People's Republic assigned three technicians, Il'in, Karashilov, and Shevyagin to restore the Hwanghae Ironworks. They divided among themselves the jobs of rebuilding blast furnaces, coke ovens, and open-hearth furnaces, and they drew up detailed plans. Engineer Korolenko of Soviet Army Headquarters also pointed out the problems that must be dealt with before proceeding with the plans for the reconstructing of the foundation of the furnaces. He had the furnaces cleaned of the old slag and metal which had hardened when the fire was extinguished. After removing the bricks, he personally directed the task of installing more than 170,000 heat-resistant bricks capable of withstanding temperatures in excess of 1,600 degrees centigrade.

Engineer Karashilov stressed the necessity of restoring the coke ovens before rebuilding blast furnaces, and made it possible to reconstruct the damaged coke ovens with over 300,000 heat-resistant bricks. The No 3 blast furnace started operating on 3 November 1947, following the complete restoration of the coke ovens on 21 July 1947.

Since the Japanese had used Manchurian coal to make coke, the acquisition of raw material was major difficulty after the liberation. However, a Soviet engineer solved this problem by discovering a new method of mixing other coals. A Soviet engineer also made two trips to Sakhalin to investigate the quality of Sakhalin coal and to solve the transportation problem entailed in shipping coal to North Korea. During the Japanese occupation, the production of coke with over 80 degrees of caloric power was possible only with Sakhalin coal, but now the production of equally good coke is doubled because of the discovery of a new production method using native coal.

Engineer Il'in contributed a great deal to the manufacture of boilers and containers for the production of blister steel.

In the world-famous Hungnam People's Chemical Factory, Engineer Grigor'yev gave much assistance during his stay of more than a year. In January and February 1947, iron sulfide was difficult to obtain and the sulfuric acid plant output was seriously affected, but by introducing a method of mixing iron oxide and iron sulfide, the plant was able to continue operations. Moreover, by the removal of sulfur from the iron oxide, Grigor'yev was very successful in conserving iron sulfide and in increasing production.

Much help was also given in reinstalling the tubular rotating furnaces in the Ch'ongjin Ironwork. This is the only installation of its kind in Asia and during the Japanese occupation the only person able to operate it was a German engineer. However, under the direction of Engineer Kolbin and four others, the furnaces, conveyer belts, upright bucket conveyers, and transformer substations were repaired and rebuilt. As a result, Furnaces No 5 and 6 were operating in April 1948, and Furnace No 3 resumed operations on 5 September 1948.

In the Kangson Steel Plant, as a result of Engineer Kolbin's direction and organization, the pig-iron works, the pipe factory, and rolling mill have been reconstructed. Beginning in November 1948, the production of rolling stock will be in full operation for the first time in Korean history.

In the restoration of the Chosen Kuksan Sugar Factory, which was reorganized as a special chemical factory during the Japanese occupation, the Soviet engineers drew detailed blueprints, built the machines themselves, and planned the factory layout.

In the rebuilding of the Namp'o Iron Refinery by around-the-clock efforts, Soviet Engineers Bol'nikov, Bochar'yev, and Yeshibov, succeeded in using briquettes instead of coke in the refining process. They also built blast furnaces and visited Songjin and other areas to search for and obtain raw materials. They even went out to search for mines. They also visited the Songnim Limestone Quarry in P'yongan Pukto, improving and mechanizing it.

It is impossible to describe all the other assistance given us. In the complete recovery of the railroads, a great deal of help was given. The Soviet Army railroad units gave direct technical advice while riding with our locomotive engineers everyday. They even operated the locomotives themselves on such difficult stretches as those between Yangkok and P'yongyang, and between Yangdok and Kowon. They were also thorough in their supervision of locomotive repairs.

Operation and Management of Industry

Since most of the important industry in Korea was owned and operated exclusively by the monopolistic Japanese capitalists, the Korean people did not have even a basic knowledge of industrial operation and management. Consequently, after the Japanese were expelled, it was not easy to systematize, operate, and manage industry. New and special methods of operation and management were absolutely necessary, especially since all industry was nationalized. In this field, too, the Soviet Army taught us advanced technical methods and gave us enthusiastic assistance.

Our workers, who had not even heard of such words as "independent cost-accounting system" and who were at first confused with the independent accounting and balanced system of management, are now able to handle this system smoothly. They have also set up a system of awards for piecework.

Acquiring Advanced Production Techniques

The great Soviet Army encouraged us to take the initiative from the very first day of their stay in our land by saying: "To be the chief contributors to their own welfare and to achieve a high degree of economic development, the Korean people must have superior production methods."

In the Aoji Coal Mine, Engineer Sizryannikov taught our laborers coal-mining methods. He actually demonstrated the technique of mining coal by going into the mine himself every day.

Engineer Il'in organized a technical training club at the Hwanghae Ironworks, which met once a week. There he taught us technical matters in great detail, particularly the system of approaching technical problems through research discussions.

The above is only a partial description of the technical assistance given by the mighty Soviet Army in the establishment of a democratic economy in North Korea, which is a guiding light for the advancement of the Asiatic peoples.

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